THE

Meadow Stream

And other Poems.

By B. W. N. GRIGG,

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Vess. Author

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Not in Watters

one other known book.

The Meadow Stream.

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Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
  Draw forth the cheerful day from night ;
  O Father, touch the east, and light
The light that shone when Hope was born.

—*Tennyson. In Memoriam xxx.*

The Meadow Stream.

Lingering wistfully,
Dreading to be
Lost 'mid the waves
Of the infinite sea,—
Wanders the meadow stream,
Falteringly flowing,
Miser-like hoarding
His hours swift-going!

Wistfully lingering,
Grudging each year,
Of Age and his Shadow
In hourly fear—
Wanders the human soul,
Child of the earth,
Loath to relinquish
The home of his birth.

Meadow stream, human soul,
Neither can stay;
Puppets of Destiny,
Each must away!
Child of the drifting cloud—
Child of the sod—
That to the ocean deeps,
This to his God.

The Simple Life.

The meadow nursed a silver lake
  That musing lay upon its breast,
And though it ever kept awake,
  Its lidless eye betokened rest.

The evening sky that bent above
  Was mirrored in its placid face,
And clouds, as pure as angels' love,
  Moved through its deeps and left no trace.

The sinking sun in robes of gold
  Was pictured in its bosom fair—
And then the stars as they patrolled
  The inverted heavens reflected there.

I looked into its deeps again
  And saw the harvest moon arise,
And pass with all her flowing train,
  Begemmed with silver, through the skies.

That lake obscure, without a name,
  Holds heaven itself within its breast,
By night, by day, unknown to fame,
  Hath sun or moon or star for guest.

Forest Flowers.

Each flower-priest doth a censer swing
  Exhaling heavenly perfumes sweet ;
And all the winds soft music sing
  Through aisle and transept where they meet.

Holier than temples wrought in stone
  That orthodox devotion rears,
Here calm, hushed, spirit-held, alone,
  All breathe their deep unconscious prayers.

More richly wrought than robes of kings
  The vestments of the blest ones are—
Glorious in hues no Tyrian brings,
  And gemmed with many a dewy star.

With warp of air and woof of light
  The Workman wove their garments fair ;
Drawn from the rainbow's seven hues bright
  The Dyer found his colors rare !

They make all languages their own,
  E'en such as never more are read,
They bear our messages, alone,
  To both the living and the dead.

So learned are they, if one when bid
  Should all of his deep secrets tell,
Then nothing to mankind were hid
  From roof of Heaven to floor of Hell.

The Mother's Lament.

In vain, in vain, with wondrous dyes
  I tint the petals of the rose,
The morning and the evening skies,
  And every lovely flower that blows !

The whisper of the lapping waves,
  The murmur of the darkling pine,
The willows muttering by their graves,
  The child's sweet laughter—all are mine !

Each glowing planet, flaming star
  That wheels in never-erring flight,
I lead through spaces dim and far
  And turn to day the primal night :

The loveliness of earth and sky
  Daily and nightly I unfold :
Yet turns to me no loving eye—
  My children worship only GOLD !

Moonlight at High-Tide.

Entranced we linger—it is Night's still noon—
To view the ocean spell-bound by the moon:
A peace divine outbreathing seems to be
From some vast spirit brooding o'er the sea.

Its dark expanse of multitudinous waves
Is bridged by silvery paths the moonlight paves—
By jeweled roadways ending at our feet,
Here where the sea-waves and the sea-beach meet.

And wandering down the long surf-beaten beach,
The moon-paths follow, as they would beseech
That we should leave the sorrow-haunted shore
And try their solid-seeming, silvered floor!

With pure Sir Galahad and Percivale
Who followed there the phantom cup—the Grail,
The dreaming soul is rapt with visions bright
And lost within the paradisal light.

'Tis in such sacred moments that we feel
Our kinship with the holy and Ideal;
In such an hour that City comes in view
Where dwells the Good, the Beautiful, the True!

Isolation.

A little maid is mine, scarce four years old,
Eyes azure, cheeks peach-tinted, hair pale gold;
How often have I looked in those dear eyes,
And looking, longed, and longing, thought with sighs,
"My love, my child, may I not come to you,
Across the seas of those wide eyes so blue?"
She looks in turn—her spirit seems to say—
"Not now, dear father, but some future day:
No soul on earth another soul may know,
The veil of flesh as yet obscures it so!"

Illusion.

Spent, spent, like a wave that inrolls from the ocean,
  And dies on the sands of a desolate shore—
Gone, gone, like a lofty but transient emotion
  That wells from the heart but returns—never more!

Absorbed like a frail, fleeting cloud of the morning
  Suffused with the color and light of the sun—
An opal, the brow of the great East adorning,
  Afloat now, now vanished, and day but begun!

Gone, gone, like the streaming Aurora, that glory
  That glows in the North like the phantom of light—
He died; and his life, like the comet's strange story,
  Is lost in the starless recesses of Night.

Peace, peace, heart of mine, dream no more of thy sorrow,
  Think of him in the joy of his absolute rest,
For all spectres of yesterday, fears of to-morrow,
  Are laid; and he folds his still hands on his breast.

Mourn not, oh my heart, since peace is his pillow,
  And gone is the doubt and the anguish and strife:
His spirit is free; he is one with the billow,
  The cloud, the Aurora, "the Light and the Life."

To the Memory of

Theodore Harding Rand.

A child, the world seemed beautiful to me—
  But dimly so—half holden eyes I strained
  On forms and colors: How their glories gained,
When I might view them, Preceptor, with thee!
Daily there fell some veil from mystery;
  And less the dulness of my vision pained;
  And less my heart unto my mind complained;
Master to pupil—sacred ministry!—

Sacred forever since that Hebrew band
  Walked with their Rabbi dear through Palestine.
  Whilst He who led them with such gentle hand
  Apparent made earth's meanings dimly seen;
Then sacred grew the hills 'round Galilee,
And heaven seemed mirrored in that azure sea.

The Book of Books.

Milton from this exhaustless fountain, drew
  His noblest inspirations and his themes—
  Epics of angels and unfading dreams
Of that sweet Paradise that Adam knew.
Shakespeare, drawn hither by an instinct true,
  As in a crystal gazing, in its streams
  Man's subtle heart saw mirrored and, meseems,
Paid a rich tribute to whom tribute's due.

Raphael and Angelo and artists rare,
  The most illumined souls of Western lands,
Stood rapt, and, gazing, found ideals there
  All too sublime, e'en for their wizard hands ;
And Genius by those sapphire waters fair,
  Entranced shall linger while her soul expands !

Why?

Why does man sorrow so? Not one knows why
God's child should suffer grief and pain and death:
His life, all told, is but a passing breath:
Why should that passing breath be one deep sigh?
Christ, crucified beneath a direful sky,
Speaks for all men in those wild words he saith—
Shows Himself man by this great shibboleth—
"Lama sabachthani." Oh, woful cry!

No answer came: and still the heavens are dumb:
Still from wrung hearts doth this same question come:
So we must think 'tis nobler in God's sight
To do His will in darkness than in light:
Better be Christ than Croesus: and become
One of man's helpers e'en by martyrdom.

The Sisters.

Love, in despair, by a newly-made grave wept alone—
Wept, and with flowers bestrewed both the mound and the stone
Sculptured with beautiful legends that told the child's worth.
Love, having scattered these tributes, with grief bowed to earth.
Then appeared Faith and said—" Love, thou art wrong
So to bemoan one who lives in the Light : hear the song
Hope sings forever to solace the hearts of the sad :"
Then appeared Hope—radiant, rainbow-hued glad.
Softly then sang she, while Love, from her weeping beguiled,
Leaned on the bosom of Faith and triumphantly smiled.

Hymn.

O, living Light ; O, golden Sun,
  The world's great heart, its life divine—
The One in all, the All in one,
  Love infinite and power benign ?

The morning stars forever sing
  Of faded worlds He maketh new :
He is of every year the Spring—
  Its tender breath, its sky of blue.

When winter fields are swathed in white,
  Or when like seas of gold they roll,
There stands the Lord of Life and Light,
  Of every lovely form the Soul.

All living things spring forth from Thee,
  In Thee all die but live again :
For death shall not unconquered be,
  Nor sin, nor grief, nor any pain.

Once but this light of Nature shined,
  And man yet feared the "Power unseen,"
Till in the wonder of Thy mind
  LOVE dwelt with Might, O, Nazarene.

O, Living Light, O, golden Sun,
  The world's great heart, its life divine,
The One in all, the All in one,
  Love infinite and power benign !